

make different kinds of choices based on the facts of their family situation or the facts of the problems of people needing long-term care. That's why I believe the best thing we can do for them now is to give them a tax credit. It is a good beginning, and I hope we can pass it.

Finally, I ask the leaders to join with me in choosing wisely to continue to invest in public health. I'm talking about investing to begin closing the devastating health gaps we see that Surgeon General Satcher has done so much work on in Native American, African-American, Hispanic, and other communities; investing and treating and preventing mental illness; investing in the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control.

Now, usually, I don't give a talk with eight points—[*laughter*]—because I'm always—you give a test, and people are lucky to remember four. But I felt better after the Doctor went over most of them. [*Laughter*] I felt like it was almost a prescription after he got through. This is not a laundry list. They are like eight panels of a protective umbrella for America's future. They're connected; they work together; they'll help millions of Americans weather the many changes in our health care system and the inevitable changes in their own lives.

Health care cannot be a partisan issue. It hasn't been, and it shouldn't be. I was glad

to hear the doctor say that he was referring to his Republican and Democratic patients. You know, every time I give this talk, I say that no one asks you—when you show up at the doctor's office and you fill out those endless forms, there's no box for Republican, Democrat, or independent. [*Laughter*]

And we see now in Washington a mood change that has already been out there for a long, long time in the country. You see it in the people coming over for the Patients' Bill of Rights; in the people saying, "Yes, we want to provide the opportunity for people with disabilities to go to work." You see it in the efforts we have with children's health insurance.

So I am optimistic about the future. I think the Copelands' daughter will have a good time being a doctor, just like her father did. I think we will make meaningful progress in this session. The bipartisan votes are out there. Nothing can stop it unless the votes aren't scheduled or we decide not to talk. We've got to schedule the votes, and all of you know I'm always willing to talk. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Lanny R. Copeland, president, American Academy of Family Physicians, his wife, Mica, and their daughter, Mary Anne.

Statement on the Earthquake in Greece September 8, 1999

On behalf of all Americans, Hillary and I extend our profound sympathy to the loved ones of those who have lost their lives and to those injured in yesterday's earthquake in Greece. Last month people around the world were moved by Greece's generous assistance to Turkey in the wake of the devastating earthquake

that struck near Istanbul. Now we have seen the same spirit of cooperation in President Demirel's pledge of support for the Greek people in their hour of need. We, too, are prepared to help the Greek Government respond to the disaster.